

AIR WAR COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

REMOTE SENSING

AND

MASS MIGRATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT

by

Mary D. Dysart, DAFC

A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty

In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements

16 February 2011

Report Documentation Page

*Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188*

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE 16 FEB 2011	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2011 to 00-00-2011		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Remote Sensing and Mass Migration Policy Development			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
			5b. GRANT NUMBER	
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)			5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
			5e. TASK NUMBER	
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Air War College,325 Chennault Circle,Maxwell AFB,AL,36112			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited				
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
14. ABSTRACT				
15. SUBJECT TERMS				
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 28
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified		
19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON				

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Biography

Mary Dixie Dysart is a historian currently assigned as a student, Air War College, Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama. Prior to attending Air War College she served as deputy director of the Air Force Historical Research Agency. She earned a B.S. in history from Troy State University, Dothan, Dothan, AL, in 1989, a M.A. in history from Auburn University, Auburn, AL, in 1991, and a PhD in history from Auburn University in 1999. She completed Air Command and Staff College by seminar in July 2002. She began her career as an Air Force historian in 1996, as an archivist at the Air Force Historical Research Agency and subsequently worked as a staff historian at NORAD/United States Space Command, the Air Force Reserve Command, and NORAD/United States Northern Command, and as deputy director of Historical Services at the Air Force Reserve Command.

Introduction

Mass migration is a global problem affecting both displaced persons, their countries of origin, and the nations that voluntarily or involuntarily receive them. The 2010 U.S. National Security Strategy recognized the domestic and international perils that refugees and the underlying causes for their dislocation represent and acknowledged that future conflicts caused by scarce resources, environmental disasters, or refugees were possible.¹ In his Congressional testimony regarding the 2010 Threat Assessment, Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair expressed concern about the prospect of mass migration from Cuba or Haiti to the United States. He also warned that population movements caused by climate change could have a negative impact in India, China, Southeast Asia, and Europe within 20 years, resulting in broad national security consequences for the United States.² The National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) stands as one of the first lines of defense against these potential catastrophes. It develops, acquires, and operates U.S. satellite systems that conduct space reconnaissance by collecting the imagery intelligence, signals intelligence, and measurement and signature intelligence required by its customers, including those in both Department of Defense (DoD) and non-DoD U.S. government agencies.³ It thus fulfills critical requirements necessary for the formulation of national strategy. Its national sensor systems provide the means to gather information beyond that required for military operations.⁴ The 2000 congressionally-chartered National Commission for the Review of the National Reconnaissance Office recommended the NRO “focus on innovation” to preclude intelligence failures that “have a direct influence on strategic choices facing the nation.”⁵ The NRO should therefore initiate procedures to identify and measure triggers for mass human migration and proactively participate in interagency forums developing policy pertaining to such events. The NRO may thus promote the attainment of U.S. National security objectives by

guiding the development of policy regarding mass migration, thereby enhancing its critical role in supporting the success of the National Security Strategy. An examination of the causes of mass migration and its effects, using the examples of water resources, agricultural conditions, disease, and climate change, demonstrates how remotely measurable factors may foreshadow large-scale human migration and shows that the NRO should use its findings to inform policy to prevent or mitigate such movements.

Causes of Internal and International Migration

People may freely choose to move from place to place, or they may relocate in response to duress. Voluntary migrations take place because people become dissatisfied with their present location. Push factors inducing those migrations motivate citizens to abandon their customary residences for another locale. Such influences might include armed conflicts; natural disasters; discrimination based on religion, politics, or ethnicity; inability to earn a living wage; depletion of natural resources; war; climate change; famine; population pressure on arable land; disease; pollution; human rights abuses; or economic considerations. Voluntary migration may also occur as a result of pull factors that provide people with positive reasons to relocate, including seeking a place with a more favorable religious or political climate, a lack of racial discrimination, improved job or educational opportunities, or a more agreeable physical environment. They might also look for a region possessing cultural or linguistic ties with the state from which they intended to emigrate.⁶ Involuntary migrations occur when populations are coerced to relocate; and like voluntary relocations, they may comprise internal and international population movements.

Globalization has contributed to mass migration. International finance and trade promote the mobility of people, ideas, and technology among and within states. While it has led to

prosperity in many regions, globalization has resulted in a concentration of wealth in the North⁷ while the developing nations of the South⁸ remain poor. The political, economic, and social interrelationships that have come into being as a result of globalization have also affected the worldwide system within which the movement of migrants takes place. Sarah Collinson, a fellow at the United Kingdom's Overseas Development Institute, contended that a number of states have recently collaborated to limit and place restrictions on cross border movements. The North became less willing to accept immigrants or asylum-seekers, who were perceived as ignoring legal entry policies, undermining national identify, or taking jobs from local workers.⁹ Sociologist Susanne Schmeidl contended that state interest could prevent United Nations (UN) member nations from taking action to prevent mass migrations as they did during the 1994 Rwanda genocide. She further maintained that the concepts of "safe zones"¹⁰ and the "right to remain"¹¹ could serve as means of preventing refugees from entering asylum states.¹²

A shift of industrial production to the South caused migration from rural areas to cities and in some cases led to the abandonment of traditional agriculture. Those unable to find jobs in urban areas forsook their homelands and sought employment in other countries, forming a base on which a continued flow of migrants built. Such a loss of residents brought changes to the country of emigration, often including an exodus of educated or professional citizens that left the home country with a larger percentage of unskilled workers. In the country of immigration, new ideas transmitted by migrants precipitated political, cultural, and social changes.¹³

Some nations have chosen to adopt policies fomenting mass migration to achieve a strategic effect: "coercion predicated on the international creation, manipulation, and exploitation of migration and refugee crises."¹⁴ Professor Kelly M. Greenhill argued that since the adoption of the UN's 1951 *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, coerced migration

has been initiated on at least 56 occasions and possibly on another 8; and in more than half of those cases, the state precipitating those population movements obtained its strategic goal.¹⁵ She maintained that the asymmetric strategy threatens civilian populations with “demographic bombs” that could disrupt their nation’s economic and social fabric.¹⁶ Among the 64 instances cited, the United States alone or in conjunction with other nations or international institutions was targeted 23 times. For example, on three occasions Cuban President Fidel Castro used the threat of mass Cuban immigration into the U.S. to gain his strategic objective of controlling the flow of Cuban refugees to the U.S.: the opening of the port of Camarioca in September 1965, the 1980 Mariel boatlift, and Castro’s August 1994 decision to suspend arrests of those who attempted to flee to the U.S. by boat. The Mariel boatlift, which resulted in over 100,000 Cubans entering America, ended only after the U.S. agreed to discuss immigration in conjunction with other issues regarding Cuba. In the other two cases, the U.S. and Cuba reached new accords on immigration regulations.¹⁷

Effects of Mass Migration on Societies

Mass migrations have a profound impact on both the people in transit and the host population. In examining such migrations brought about by environmental change, one should consider how the availability of natural resources affects mobility decisions, the agricultural considerations entailed in large-scale population shifts, and the frictions that arise between people prior to and as a result of mass relocations.

The UN Population Fund’s *State of the World Population 2010* reported that more than 40 million people were currently displaced either internally or living as refugees in other countries, with internally displaced persons outnumbering refugees. John Holmes, UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, described them as “disoriented, traumatized,

confused, fearful, disempowered, dependent, helpless.”¹⁸ For example, more than 2.6 million persons were displaced within Iraq and another 1.9 million had fled to other countries. A sense of community was lacking among Iraqis who had fled to Jordan, Iraqi children were sometimes bullied in the schools, and sexual and gender-based violence existed within refugee communities. Since Jordan had not signed the U.N.’s 1951 *Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees*, refugees there were “guests” who were not permitted to hold jobs, a state of affairs that placed them in precarious financial circumstances. Of the estimated half million Iraqi refugees in Jordan, only 30,000 had registered with the UN Human Rights Commission (UNHRC), and approximately 12,000 of that number were receiving financial aid. Many Iraqi refugees with the wherewithal moved on to other countries, leaving an increasingly poor refugee population remaining in Jordan. Women and girls were particularly at risk due to their susceptibility to exploitation and violence, a fact that adversely affected the health and well-being of children dependent upon them.¹⁹

Displaced persons within Iraq were vulnerable to being targeted because of their religious beliefs, identification with political parties or tribes, and cooperation with U.S. or Iraqi forces. Those who had no family or friends to move in with were relegated to public facilities or to camps operated by the Iraqi Red Crescent Society or the Ministry of Displacement and Migration. They experienced shortages of the basic necessities of life and placed a huge burden on the communities in which they were sheltered. Iraqi refugees faced the prospect of remaining in a status similar to Palestinian refugees who have been marginalized for years. They were subject to social isolation, and many Iraqi refugee children were not attending school.²⁰

In early 2009, internally displaced persons in Afghanistan numbered approximately 231,000, another 278,000 former refugees had returned home, and about 3 million Afghan

refugees remained in other countries.²¹ The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that more than 5 million refugees had returned to Afghanistan since 2002, taxing the country's resources and intensifying the need for basic necessities like food, water, shelter, transportation, and a means of earning a living. Children were at risk of being forced into child labor, human trafficking, smuggling, and marriage at an early age. Reintegration into Afghan society remained difficult for those who may have spent years in Pakistan or Iran and returned in a condition of abject poverty, and many of the returnees owned no property in their native country.²² These problems were exacerbated by continuing hostilities in Afghanistan.

As of 1 January 2008, Afghanistan and Iraq were the two top countries of origin for refugees, together being the source of 43 percent of the total number from the top ten countries.²³ The difficulties encountered by refugees and displaced persons from those two nations were typical of those experienced by their counterparts around the world. States targeted by mass migrants therefore faced a variety of social and political problems, not the least of which was a commitment for resources of an unknown magnitude necessary to provide for the migrants' basic human needs for an indeterminate amount of time. In the post-9/11 world, states were also concerned that terrorists might seek to enter their borders along with refugees. As of December 2008, 147 countries had signed either the UN's 1951 *Refugee Convention* or its 1967 *Protocol*, which mandated that refugees not be returned to regions where threats to their lives or freedom existed. The UN therefore proposed three solutions for refugees: voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement. Those unwilling to return to their country of origin, however, found few nations willing to accept them.²⁴

International Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons

The UN has defined an international migrant as “any person who changes his or her country of usual residence” voluntarily or involuntarily.²⁵ A 1992 UN report identified internally displaced individuals as “‘persons who have been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers, as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural or man-made disasters, and who are within the territory of their own country.’”²⁶ The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) cited “economic hardship; social, religious and ethnic instability; rapid population growth; political repression; the threat or use of force; environmental disasters; and threat of starvation, and internal migration” as direct and indirect causes of the mass migration of humans.²⁷ Maintaining that it was often difficult to determine whether a particular person’s reasons for migration were voluntary or involuntary, the IPU acknowledged the profound “social, economic, administrative, political and national costs” of mass migrations for both the losing and gaining nations.²⁸ Year after year, the number of involuntarily displaced persons continues to rise. By the end of 2004, the total population of concern as calculated by the UNHCR reached 19.2 million. That number included 9.2 million refugees, with the remainder being comprised of asylum seekers, returned refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returned IDPs, stateless persons, and various other persons of concern. IDPs alone totaled in excess of 5.4 million.²⁹ By the end of 2009, the worldwide total had reached 36.5 million, with 15.6 million of that number being IDPs.³⁰

In order to minimize the negative consequences of large-scale migrations, the United States should develop an effective early warning system to prevent or mitigate mass population movements. The first step in accomplishing this is to identify the factors that provoke such migrations. In 1989, Lance Clark of the Refugee Policy Group developed a model for early

warning of forced migration, identifying its underlying causes, the immediate provocation for movement, intervening factors that increased or decreased the likelihood of compulsory relocation, and the stimulus that initiated the actual migration. Writing in 1995, Susanne Schmeidl introduced a quantitative element to Clark's model. She maintained that the root causes of forced migrations were circumstances existing over long periods of time, such as religious differences, border disputes, ecological problems, or poor governance. She held that proximate causes for migration exacerbate pre-existing factors, such as when government is unwilling or unable to address longstanding, divisive problems.³¹ She examined factors facilitating or complicating forced migration, including:

- Coping strategies that might preclude international migration
- Perceived or actual obstacles to international flight
- Presumed reception in target country
- Cultural precedents for decision making
- Seasonal considerations such as weather or agriculture³²

and agreed with other scholars' conclusion that early warning should be accomplished by collecting data that indicated a forced migration might occur, analyzing it, building scenarios, determining possible responses, and transmitting the information to decision makers.³³

Remotely Measurable Predictors of Mass Migration

Many indicators that mass migration is imminent or that it has begun are remotely measurable. Imagery obtained from satellites and manned and unmanned aerial reconnaissance systems provides evidence of large-scale human movement by noting changes in historical patterns of population distribution. It is also particularly useful in determining changes in environmental factors—especially those driven by climate change—that provide the impetus for

mass migration. In the early 1980s, scientists realized that only remote sensing by satellites could provide overall measurement of gross primary production (GPP) and net primary production (NPP) on a global scale.³⁴ Researchers recommended making GPP and NPP data about conditions within the biosphere available in a manner similar to the provision of weather reports. That information would provide the basis for determining the extent to which an area could support human life and in predicting desertification, deforestation, and the effects of wildfires, pollution, and climate change. The discovery of deterioration in an ecosystem could indicate the need for changes in land management policies. Professor Steven W. Running and others concluded that strategic planners could use long-term trends in NPP to measure regional declines in productive capability. For example, they noted that desertification in sub-Saharan Africa, long presumed to be due to overgrazing, in fact corresponded to precipitation levels. They concluded that only large scale remote sensing could measure changes in vegetation on a regional level and pointed to the value of remotely observing and predicting the runoff of water, which is rapidly becoming the most limited natural resource. Running and his research team emphasized the utility of NPP data in land management, the formulation of environmental policy, and tracking changes in the biosphere.³⁵ Earth observation by satellites can detect potential threats to human security that may spark mass migration such as stressed water resources, adverse agricultural conditions, disease, and climate change.

Water Resources

As the world's population swells and the global mean surface temperature increases,³⁶ the supply of clean, safe water continues to diminish. When temperatures rise, less water is stored in glaciers and snow packs, which currently comprise 68.6 percent of the earth's total supply of fresh water and supply water for one-sixth of the world's population.³⁷ Bloomberg reported in

2006 that “the lack of usable water worldwide has made it more valuable than oil,” since its World Water Index of eleven utilities had returned 35 percent per year since 2003 while oil and gas stocks yielded only 29 percent.³⁸ The American College of Environmental Lawyers reported in January 2010 that the Bloomberg World Water Index had continued to produce larger returns each year than either gas and oil stocks or the Standard & Poor’s Index.³⁹ Bloomberg also noted that the UN had predicted that by 2050, water deficits would affect in excess of 2 billion people in 48 nations. It further observed that China, which is home to 20 percent of the world’s population, has access to only 7 percent of its fresh water supply and forecast that between 1995 and 2025, global use of fresh water for drinking, agriculture and industry could increase by 22 percent.⁴⁰

Scientists use satellites to measure the amount of water in the Amazon River floodplain, enabling them to predict droughts and floods that may result from global climate change.⁴¹ A European Space Agency (ESA) project has helped Zambia manage its water shortages. Its multispectral MERIS sensor on Envisat mapped existing water resources and vegetation in the Kafue River Basin and identified potential dam sites. “IWAREMA [Integrated Water Resource Management for Zambia] was one of the projects initiated under ESA’s TIGER initiative, launched in 2002 employing space technology to assist African countries to overcome water-related problems and to bridge Africa’s water information gap using satellite data. To date, more than 100 African water basin authorities, universities and other organizations have become involved in TIGER projects across the continent.”⁴²

The Horn of Africa, an arid to semi-arid region, is subject to frequent droughts. Shortages of rainfall cause recurrent crop failures, which precipitate the starvation that promotes mass migration. Geostationary weather satellites collect data that may be used with geographical

information systems (GIS) to monitor current conditions, identify seasonal trends, and predict rainfall, providing the ability to plan for and mitigate future drought events. In 1975, the UN Economic Commission for Africa chartered the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development, which cooperates with NASA to initiate SERVIR, a satellite-based disaster early warning system for Africa that makes disaster information available over the internet. Data from Meteosat second generation, a geostationary weather satellite, and SPOT, which provides data on vegetation, are available throughout Africa on free receiving stations provided by the European Union.⁴³ Used together these systems can predict upcoming water crises in time to allow the initiation of policies and programs designed to ameliorate the effects of shrinking water resources.

Agricultural Conditions

The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro identified desertification as a significant environmental and social challenge for the future. The relentless progress of desertification adversely affects the world's poorest people. Formerly arable land continues to decline in productivity due to loss of ground cover, erosion, and deterioration in soil quality. Areas subject to desertification comprise 40 percent of the global land surface and support more than one billion people. The European Space Agency sponsors DesertWatch, a satellite-based information service, to identify regions at risk for desertification in Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Turkey, which together contain 30 million hectares of drylands that are home to 16.5 million people. Desertification can be mitigated or reversed if high-risk areas can be identified in time. "Satellite images can highlight relevant land use change along with increased surface reflectivity, temperature, dryness, and dustiness. Infrared sensors can detect vegetation stress due to environmental shifts."⁴⁴ Once the at risk areas have been identified, measures to restore degraded

lands and reduce the incidence of human-caused droughts such as those taught at the Africa Centre for Holistic Management in Zimbabwe may be initiated.⁴⁵

Commercially available satellite or aerial remote sensing technology can provide a wealth of information for agricultural applications. Satellite Imaging Corporation, for example, provides “satellite imagery data at different spatial, spectral and temporal resolutions for agriculture and crop assessment, crop health, change detection, environmental analysis, irrigated landscape mapping, yield determination, and soils analysis.”⁴⁶ The images it delivers “can show variations in organic matter and drainage patterns. Soils higher in organic matter can be differentiated from lighter sandier soil that has a lower organic matter content.”⁴⁷ Satellites can monitor crop growth throughout the season, identifying problem areas such as weed infestations and assessing the effectiveness of watering.⁴⁸ The widespread employment of such technology could optimize agricultural production, allay the effects of climate change, and reduce the risk of mass migration due to food shortages.

Disease

Remote sensing has broad applications in monitoring the spread of disease, providing early warning of health emergencies, and allowing for the application of preventative measures. For example, in 2008, malaria, a preventable disease, infected 247 million people, killing nearly 1 million. It is caused by parasites transmitted to people by the bite of an infected *Anopheles* mosquito. About half of the world’s population is in danger of contracting malaria, with most cases occurring in sub-Saharan Africa and fewer in Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and some parts of Europe.⁴⁹ Remote sensing may be used to determine concentrations of *Anopheles* mosquitoes in areas with a particular type of land cover. NOAA and METEOSAT weather satellites have provided valuable data in correlating rainfall and the amount of green vegetation

with the density of the mosquito population. Landsat has been used to determine the connection between vegetation characteristics and malaria transmission, and Landsat 1, 2, and SPOT provided data on flora, water plants, and land cover that are linked to the breeding environment for *Anopheles*. These studies merged “landscape ecology, vector biology, and human epidemiology, linking large-scale maps to individual risk in local human populations.”⁵⁰ A 2005 study conducted in Thailand used Landsat5 TM to classify eight land cover types that corresponded with the mosquito life cycle. The researchers were able to build a statistical model that predicted *Anopheles* mosquito densities on varied land covers, allowing for targeting of mosquito eradication efforts.⁵¹

Remote sensing has been used extensively to provide early warning of disease. Cholera outbreaks in Bangladesh have been predicted by detecting coastal algae blooms containing *Vibrio cholerae*, which serves as a food source for zooplankton that are later consumed in drinking water.⁵² Forecasts using GPP data may be used to identify areas where infected mice might transmit hantavirus. Since the mouse population is directly correlated with the productivity of desert plants, satellite monitoring of the seasonal changes in vegetation can forewarn health officers of the spread of the mice into new areas the possible disease outbreaks.⁵³ Remote sensing has further enabled tracking of climate conditions that are favorable to disease outbreaks and to predict occurrence of diseases in new areas due to climate change in time to initiate public health actions to assuage their impact.⁵⁴

Scientists contend that the consequences of climate change on human health will be largely negative. It has already affected the transmission and geographic distribution of diseases such as malaria, dengue, diseases transmitted by ticks, cholera, and other diarrheal diseases. The proliferation of these diseases is exacerbated by human and animal migrations.⁵⁵ Disease and

health issues are numbered among the push factors for human migration. Data gathered by satellites and input into geographic information systems introduces a spatial perspective on disease and comprises a valuable tool for analysis in public health and epidemiology that can be used to improve public health, thus diminishing the impetus for mass migration due to disease.⁵⁶

Climate Change

The 2010 National Security Strategy mandates a focus on building international relationships to combat the threat of climate change and warns that it can threaten the security of regions.⁵⁷ London-based non-governmental organization International Alert identified four primary risks associated with climate change: “political instability, economic weakness, food insecurity, and large-scale migration.”⁵⁸ It concluded that impoverished countries, which often suffer from poor governance, would find it difficult to cope with climate change and that climate change would likely contribute to a rise in armed conflict. If food supplies were to become scarce, mass migrations would likely ensue, heightening the possibility of violent clashes with governments that fear large influxes of foreigners and attempt to forestall them with provocative policies. Migrants moving into areas that are only marginally productive would be most likely to be perceived as a liability to a struggling nation.⁵⁹

International Alert has predicted that global migration as a result of climate change could affect 200 million people by 2050. Climate change may displace coastal populations living at or near sea level. Melting glaciers may affect the water supply for millions. Droughts or floods may ensue. Desertification may take place. Diseases may spread, and growing seasons, crop yields, and agricultural zone characteristics may change. To cope with these problems, policies that address ways of adjusting to a new environment must be put in place.⁶⁰

As climate change takes place, increasingly more precise predictions of climate variations are required. The recent increase in satellite data made available for use in computer modeling has improved forecasts, but the addition of more categories would increase their accuracy. For example, climate forecasts could be enhanced by increased data on soil moisture over large regions measured by satellite-based instruments. The European Space Agency initiated its Soil Moisture and Ocean Salinity mission in November 2009, and NASA plans to begin the Soil Moisture Active and Passive mission in 2014. The U.S. National Research Council has called for proposed increased cooperation between U.S. government agencies and universities to improve forecast quality and the creation of public archives to facilitate the review of past predictions for accuracy.⁶¹

Policy Recommendations

Despite its focus on designing and operating U.S. reconnaissance satellites, given the profound effects that result from mass migrations, the National Reconnaissance Office should take prompt action to identify the precursors of push factors. This may be accomplished by improving targeting, processing, exploitation, and dissemination of data related to mass migrations; establishing mechanisms to enable the provision of advance warning of impending disasters; and participating in the development of response plans in coordination with social scientists, who can assist in integrating remotely collected data with information acquired by conventional means.⁶² Satellite operating doctrine should be reexamined in regard to allocation considerations. Increased access should be provided to archived data to facilitate tracking change over time. During the Clinton administration, for example, the CIA allowed civilian scientists to review archived materials to identify environmental problems, and the Medea Group chartered by the National Intelligence Council in 1992 studied past satellite imagery to detect

diseases in trees, track deforestation, and assess the condition of fisheries.⁶³ Finally, the NRO should foster an internal climate that promotes innovation in the use of existing systems, the development of new ones and their creative employment.

The United States should continue cooperation with the UN's early warning initiatives and technologies designed to monitor and identify dangers to the earth, water, and air. Sharing data from international scientific monitoring systems and enhancing training and communication networks can assist in reducing the incidence of mass migration in the event of a natural disaster.⁶⁴ At the same time, continued research into probable migration patterns will allow planners to identify the migrant populations and their likely destinations, enabling early intervention to identify potential problems and deconflict the process.⁶⁵ The collection of information including specific indicators of impending large population movement; analysis of information by attaching meaning to the indicators, placing them into context, and recognizing crisis development; formulation of best and worst-case scenarios; creation of response options; and the communication of the result to decision makers are key steps in the process of effective early warning.⁶⁶

In her study of coercive migrations, Greenhill put forward three policy options for preventing their occurrence. First, she suggested that policymakers study historical examples of such behavior in order to avoid the pitfalls other negotiators encountered. Second, she proposed that states vulnerable to such coercion institute a farsighted public policy, sponsor education and research, and offer liberal economic aid before the threatened migration begins to limit or prevent an influx of refugees. Finally, Greenhill recommended targeted states undertake actions within the threatening state to alter internal conditions or to bring about regime change.⁶⁷ These measures are suitable for employment as preventives for impending mass migrations identified

by analysis of data produced by remote sensing. By looking for early warning of factors that predispose populations to relocate in partnership with social scientists, the NRO may initiate timely policy discussions to identify the steps the U.S. should take to prevent internal or international population displacements.

Conclusion

In a new and evolving threat climate, assessing the impact of mass human migration and identifying where the next crisis will occur has assumed a new importance. Stress on water resources, degrading agricultural conditions, disease, and climate change are but four of the factors that initiate the mass population movements that adversely affect not only the migrants themselves but a globalized world. All nations are justifiably concerned about mass migration and its attendant concerns related to human smuggling and trafficking, terrorism, the costs of asylum, and the burdens refugees might impose on society. Like the four examples discussed above, many changes that presage mass migration are detectable by earth observation, which provides the data necessary to identify problem areas and plan to diminish impending humanitarian crises. The implementation of sound policies formulated in anticipation of the relocation of large numbers of people will help mitigate its effects. The 2008 National Defense Strategy calls for the United States to assist at risk nations “to defend and govern themselves” by “addressing root causes of turmoil . . . [to] help states stabilize threatened areas.”⁶⁸ Proactive planning to employ U.S. assets across the broad spectrum of capabilities will answer this call and promote the achievement of U.S. national security objectives. The National Reconnaissance Office should therefore broaden its knowledge base concerning the events that drive and proceed from mass migrations to ensure that national assets are used optimally to inform strategic decision making.

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³² Ibid., 139.

³³ Ibid., 140.

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